

# The Visor pluckt off

FROM

## Richard Thompson of Bristol, Clerk,

*In a Plain and True Character of Him.*



**R**ICHARD THOMPSON was descended of Honest Protestant Parentage both by Father and Mothers side : and whilst he was yet but *very Green* in years, he was sent by them from *Wakefield-School* in *Yorkshire*, about the year, 1663. unto *University Colledge* in *Oxford*, and thereof he was a Member and a Scholar in the *Old Foundation*, by the space of six or seven years.

Before he had fully performed his Exercise for his *Masters Degree* (which he afterwards went to compleat at *Cambridge*, forasmuch as he took himself unjustly put by a *Fellowship* in *Un. Coll. Oxon*) he entred into *Deacons Orders*, Dr. *Fuller* Bishop of *Lincoln* Ordaining him in *S. Margarets Church Westminster*, about the year 1668. and he received his *Orders of Priesthood* from the same hands in King *Henry the Seventh's Chappel*, the fourteenth of *March*, 1670.

He was no sooner thus qualified but he was sent by the then President of *Magdalen Colledge*, the Reverend Dr. *Thomas Pierce*, to serve in his Cure of *Brington* in *Northamptonshire*, and continued there some years, not without some special Marks of Favour from the Right Honourable the Earl of *Sunderland*, who lived in that Parish.

But Dr. *Pierce* being made *Dean of Sarum*, about the year 1675. he quitted that *Curacy*, as the other did his *Living*, and went upon Invitation given him, to live with the Dean in his own House at *Sarum*; where he soon after in the year 1676. bestowed upon him, First a *Prebend*, and then a Presentation to *St. Maries* in *Marlborough*. In the year following, 1677. he Travelled with Mr. *Jo: Norborne*, of *Calne* in *Wiltshire*: But before he had spent full twelve months in *France* with him, he was recalled back into *England* upon the *Vacancy of Bedminster* by *Bristol*, which is the Name of that *Living* whereof he is now Possess.

Whilst he was abroad, he neither Studied at *St. Omers*, nor *Doway*, neither ever saw those Places, neither ever Travelled over any part of *Flanders* or *Italy*, but of *France* only.

At *Paris* chiefly, (and in the *Academy of Monsieur Foubert* a Protestant) he spent near seven months of the time he stayed there. And all that time frequented the *English Embassadors Chappel*, received the Sacrament whenever it was administred, Preacht twice, and Read Prayers often in that Chappel during his stay there,

At *Gien* upon the *Loyre*, he sojourned in *Monsieur Du Paizy*, the Protestant Ministers House, and all the time he stayed there, (which was about six weeks,) he went constantly to the Protestant Church, and to that only : And moreover, received the Sacrament from *Monsieur Du Paizyes Hands*, chiefly to make the Papists there despair of warping him to their Communion, unto which he had been solicited by some offers of Preferment.

At *Blois* he frequented the Protestant Church in like manner, and lodged in a Protestants House by the space of six weeks more, and never lodged in a Papists, but when the Necessities of Travel would admit of no other.

Yet he doth not deny but he fought curiously the Acquaintance of any men *more famous than other*, within the several *Orders* that are in the *Church of Rome*, as well as of those in the *Protestant Churches*. And that he frequently heard the *Peres Bourdalou* and *Menefrie*, (as well as the Reverend *Clode* and *Daille*, &c.) forasmuch as they were great *Masters* of the *Language*, and of the *Pulpit*.

He doth not deny, but that he saw *Maß* performed *twice or thrice*, whilst he was *abroad*, (*having never seen it performed in England*,) But faith 'twas *Curiosity*, not *Religion* carried him thither. And that he only went to *See* and *Observe*, not to *Partake*, and much less to *Assist* at that **Hott Idolatrous Sacrifice**.

He declareth that he is so far from being *Staggered* in his *Religion*, by *what he saw*, that he is but the *more Confirmed and Rooted* in it. And shall choose to live out of an *Alms-Basket*, within the *Communion of the Church of England*, rather than be tempted by the *Offer of any Preferment* (be it never so *Great*) to *Apostatize* from *Her*.

Since his return in *England*, 1678. He hath made it his *Business more than ever*, to serve this *Churches Interest*; and *Lives and Acts* in all humble *Obedience* unto all *Her Laws*. Owns *Her Homilies* and *Articles*, the *Standard of True Protestant Religion*. Hath frequently *Subscribed* to them, and to the *Book of Canons* and *Constitutions*, and perhaps few men vary less, from the *Rubrick* in performing all the **Offices** contained within the *Book of Common-Prayer*.

He hath taken the *Oaths of Allegiance* and *Supremacy* at least *Eight several times*, as his *Circumstances* have required him, and how he hath *Preacht* and *Acted* in *Conformity* thereto, there are *Thousands* in the *City of Bristol* will bear him witness.

He hath hitherto refused **no Tests** to assure him to the *Government*, for a **True Protestant**, and is farther ready to embrace any **future Tests**, that shall lawfully be **imposed on him**.

So that 'tis mightily to be *wondred at*, How it comes about that he is *traduced* for a *Papist*, or any way *Popishly Affected*.

For, besides that even his *Enemies* that *now persecute* him, cannot *deny*, but though he be *very Young*, yet he leadeth a *most Strict and Severe Life*, and someway *Answerable* to his *High Character and Calling*: He hath a *Cloud of Friends* to attest that he hath been *always most Industrious* to serve the *King* and the *Church of England*, notwithstanding the *Many Difficulties* which he hath had to *wrestle* with, and some *more than Ordinary Discouragements* too, since he came to *Bristol*.

*For Example.*

I. It is *Notoriously known* there, that in *less than two years* space he *Profelyted* many *Anabaptists* and *Quakers*, *Baptizing* them *Publickly*.

II. That in the same space of *Time* he hath perfectly *grounded* near *two hundred Children* in the *Church of Englands Catechism*, and it is not long since he carried up near an *hundred* of them to the *Colledge*, there to be *Confirmed* by the *Present Bishop*.

III. It is certain that whether he *Preach* or *Read* the *Prayers* only, he is never without a *full Auditory*, and that there are *three times* the number of *Communicants*, that used to be, whensoever he hath administred the *Holy Sacrament*.

IV. There are many most worthy *Gentlemen* in that *City*, that will not be *Asbamed* to own their *Establishment* in the *Church of England*, to the great pains which he hath taken with, and among them.

V. Lastly, Forasmuch as his present *Circumstances* do require it, he may *dare* to *Boast* farther; That as no *Young Man* was ever more *persecuted* by the *Church of Englands Enemies* within that *City*; and particularly, by *Day*, *Young*, *Young the Preacher*, *Whitehead*, *Hort*, *Roe*, *Read*, *Tyley*, *Crosley* **their Factors**; So hath no *Young Man* been ever more *belov'd* there, among *pers*, and our *Gracious Sovereigns* most obedient **Subjects** and **Friends**.

Sir John Lloyd's Certificate concerning Mr. Thompson, under the  
Seal of the Office of his Majoralty.

**W**Hereas *Richard Thompson*, Vicar of *St. Mary Redcliff*, and *St. Thomas*, two Eminent Churches within the City of *Bristol*, even from the time of his first appearance to officiate in those Churches, hath been privily traduced, and now of late openly and maliciously branded, by the multiforme Fanaticks of this City, for a Church-Papist and Jesuite, for the Rector of *St. Omers*, so Nick-naming *St. Thomas*, and with many like Terms of Obloquy and Slander, the Invention whereof may be reckon'd upon as the very first and peculiar gift of that Party, whose great and only Master-piece it hath been and still is, by like Maliciously Witty and Wicked Methods and Artifices to expose alike His Loyalty and Ministry, and to lessen that Esteem and Reputation he hath thereby gained in the Hearts and Affections of all the Kings Majesties Loyal and Loving Subjects within this City.

These are therefore at the Request of and just Due to the said *Richard Thompson*, to Certifie unto all, unto whom these Presents shall come, that the said *Richard Thompson*, is well known to me *John Lloyd*, Knight, and Major of the said City, and to all the Kings Majesties Loyal and Loving Subjects therein, to be a Person of most Innocent and Exemplary Life and Conversation, a most Constant and Careful Dispenser of Gods most Holy Word unto the People under his Charge, a most Diligent and Zealous Assertor of the Kings Majesties Supremacy in all Causes Ecclesiastical and Civil, in opposition to all Schismatical and Factious Persons and Principles, under what Names soever they pass or prevail amongst us, and also of all the Christian Doctrines, together with the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of *England*, as they are now Owned and Established by Law.

In Testimony whereof I have caused the Seal of my Office of Majoralty to be affixed, Dated the Eighteenth Day of *September* Anno Dom. 1679.



*John Lloyd*, Major.

*The Lord Bishop of Chichester, lately of Bristol, his Certificate.*

**T**Hese are to Certifie whom it may concern, That Mr. *Richard Thompson*, Minister of *St. Mary Redcliff*, in the City of *Bristol*, is a Person of much more than ordinary Endowments for Learning, an Excellent Preacher, and which crowns both the former, a man of a Clean Life and Unreprovable Conversation. A Person free from Novelties in Religion, but very Sound and Orthodox in the Doctrins he Preaches: and thorowly Conformable as to Discipline. Those Parishioners when he came to them were a perverse Ill-principled People. His Convincing Arguments together with his modest and prudent Behaviour among them, hath brought them to Conformity, and made some Christians indeed who before he came were only reputed so. He hath Converted *Quakers*, and brought many *Non-Conformists* home again to the Church. The Truth is, his Learning, Industry in his Calling, and his most Exemplary Life, may be an Excellent Pattern for all that City Minsters to Imitate. And it would be both for their Credit and Comfort to do after his most Laudable Example.

I could say much more of him, because whilst I was Bishop of *Bristol*, he lived under my own Eye. I was Witness to that Great and Good Success God did Bless the Great Pains he took in the place where yet he is. Himself and one Clergy-man or two more, was all I could boast of in that City whilst I was their Bishop. But in Conclusion, I know no Man of his Years, that better deserves very good Preferment in our Church, than this Young Man doth. And this I do Testifie sincerely from my heart, and give under my hand, this fourteenth day of *September*, in the Year of our Lord, 1679. at my Palace in *Chichester*.

*Guy Chichester*.



121

The Dean and Chapter of Sarum, their Certificate.

**O**Mnibus quorum interest innotescat per Præsentes, Ricardum Thompson in Artibus Magistrum, & Vicarium de Bedminster juxta Bristoliam, quamdiu apud nos commoratus est, pie vitam, sobrieq; & laudabiliter traduxisse. In concionibus sæpe habendis sedulo curam adhibuisse, strenue studiis Theologicis navasse operam; Nec unquam (quod scimus) docuisse quicquam vel tenuisse, quod Ecclesia Anglicana non etiam approbat atque tuetur. Cujus præsertim Disciplinæ & superioribus quibuscunque ab omni parte conformem morigerumque se præstitit. In quorum omnium Testimonium, & fidem iisdem faciendam, nomina nostra & cognomina, plane & ex animo opposuimus. Sept. 13. Annoq; Salutis reparatæ. 1679.

Thomas Pierce Dec. Sarum  
Daniel Whitby Præcentor Sarum  
Ricardus Drake Cancellarius Sarum  
Ricardus Hill Can. Resid. Sarum  
Franciscus Horton Can. Resid. Sarum

*A Certificate Signed by several of his Auditors upon the Thirtieth of January, 1679.  
being Persons of great Reputation for Loyalty as well as Fortune.*

**T**Hese are to Certifie all whom it may concern, That we whose Names are hereunto Subscribed, were present at the Parish Church of St. Thomas within the City of Bristol, on the Thirtieth Day of January, 1679. where we then heard Mr. Richard Thompson Preach very solemnly on the Occasion of that Days Fast, To which Sermon every one of us for himself doth Declare, he was very attentive. And we do all hereby Certifie and Declare that we do not remember that the said Mr. Thompson, did then say in his Prayer or Sermon, That there was no Popish Plot, but a Presbyterian Plot, or any thing to that, or the like effect. And we are ready to make Oath of the same, if required. But on the contrary, we have heard him detest and abhor the Popish Plot. And we do further Certifie that the said Mr. Thompson, is, and by all the time we have known him, hath been a True and Loyal Subject to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and of a very Sober and Pious Life and Conversation amongst us, every way suitable to his Function. Witness Our Hands this Thirteenth day of November, 1680.

John Hicks, Alderman.  
Richard Crump Alderman.  
John Knight  
George Morgan  
Thomas Davidge  
Edmond Brand  
John Broadway  
Walter Gunter  
John Hellier

John Oliff  
John Teomans  
John Combes  
George Bouchier  
Thomas Turner  
George Hart  
James Millerd  
Ralph Oliff  
James Twyford

Daniel Pym  
Thomas Hartwell  
Edmund Arundel  
Richard Benson  
Francis Teomans  
Thomas Durbin  
Charles Allen.

THE END.